The Myrtle

"INSTEAD OF THE BRIER SHALL COME UP THE MYRTLE TREE." ISA. LV. 13.

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Hang up the Baby's Stocking.

HANG up the baby's stocking:
Be sure you don't forget!
The dear little dimpled darling, —
She ne'er saw Christmas yet!

But I've told her all about it,
And she opened her big blue eyes;
And I'm sure she understands it,
She looked so funny and wise.

Dear! what a tiny stocking!
It doesn't take much to hold
Such little pink toes as baby's
Away from the frost and cold.

But then, for the baby's Christmas,
It will never do at all;
Why Santa wouldn't be looking
For anything half so small!

I know what we'll do for the baby,
I've thought of the very best plan;
I'll borrow a stocking of grandma,
The longest that ever I can;

And you'll hang it by mine, dear mother,
Right here, in the corner—so;
And write a letter to Santa,
And fasten it on to the toe.

Write: "This is the baby's stocking,
That hangs in the corner here;
You never have seen her, Santa,
For she only came this year.

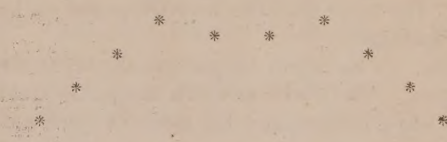
But she's just the blessedest baby! —
And now, before you go,
Just cram her stocking with goodies,
From the top clean down to the toe."

A Christmas Story.

CHARACTERS.

MARY and EVA, two young ladies.
IDA, GRACE, ELLEN, JENNIE, GEORGE, OTIS, } Children from ten to thirteen years of age.
HOWARD and GERTRUDE, two little children.

(The eight children enter, four from each side. Enter marching and singing a lively Christmas song. If desirable, others in the audience can sing with them or join in the chorus. At the close of the song enter Mary and Eva. All take positions indicated by the figure below.)



Mary. Children, have you had a pleasant Christmas festival?

George. Oh yes, we have had a merry, merry time!

Eva. Christmas is merry, but it is holy too. I am afraid you children are apt to forget that.

Mary. That is hardly surprising, for we are apt to make the Christmas time one sweet confusion of delights for the little ones. Now I propose to tell you a story before we part.

Gertrude. O do. Is it a fairy story?

Howard. I'd rather hear a true story.

Mary. Well, little Howard, my story is true, and beautiful as true, and still more wonderful. Far back in the past, many, many years ago, a little child was born. He was a Prince, the only son of a mighty King.

Otis. Oh, I like such stories! Tell us about the king's palace. Did it have marble halls, and were the floors inlaid with gold, and did it have wonderful gardens about it where the little prince could play?

Jennie. Tell us about the baby prince, and about the beautiful dresses that he wore, and the lovely toys they brought him. I wonder if he laughed and cried like other babies, and if the Queen, his mother, ever held him in her arms?

Mary. No, no, children, I cannot tell you of a marble palace full of all beautiful things and wonderful gardens, for this baby Prince was born in a very poor and humble place. He slept upon no royal couch with silken draperies of purple and gold, but upon a rude bed of straw; and his tender mother had no rich embroidered robes in which to dress her precious child, but only garments cheap and coarse.

Ellen. Now that was pitiful and very strange. How did it happen so? Where was his father, who you say was a great king? I thought that kings were rich and lived in palaces.

Jennie. Did not the father love the little prince? If so, how came he then so very, very poor?

Eva. Oh, yes, the Father loved the Son with a mighty love and He gave him a glorious kingdom to rule over.

Otis. Your story is a riddle and I cannot solve it. The baby was a prince and fared like a beggar. His father gave him everything and yet he had nothing.

Eva. A few words will give you the key to the mystery. The cradle in which the young child slept was a manger, and his mother's name was Mary.

Otis. Oh, now I know! I wonder I did not know at the first.

George. It was Jesus Christ, and we celebrate Christmas for his birthday.

Eva. Yes, that is why Christmas is holy. It is the anniversary of the birth of Jesus Christ. God had promised through his prophets in all ages of the world that He would send the Saviour. So men were looking for him and praying for his coming. Can any of you tell me why they were not ready to accept Jesus when he came?

Grace. It was because they did not understand the promise. They were looking for an earthly king who should come in great pomp and power. They could not believe that this little child born in poverty and obscurity was the promised Messiah.

Ida. But there were wise men who saw his star in the east and they hastened to find and worship the infant Saviour. The bright star led them on and on until it came and stood over where Mary and the youg child were. Then they went in and fell down and worshipped him and gave him precious gifts.

Eva. Were there any others besides the wise men who knew of his coming?

Ellen. The shepherds watching their flocks by night. A radiant angel appeared to them and the glory of God shone all about them. They were afraid, but the angels said, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people."

Grace. That is the most beautiful part of the whole story. Jesus had come to the world, the greatest blessing which the Heavenly Father could bestow, and all Heaven was full of a new joy! How sweet were the words of the angel, "Fear not, for I bring you good tidings of great joy!". What gladness and awe must have fallen upon those simple shepherds!

Ellen. Then suddenly appeared a multitude of the heavenly hosts praising God and singing, "Glory to God in the highest; on earth peace and good will to man."

Ida. That was so glorious and wonderful! It seems that the angels had a festival in Heaven on that first Christmas night! If they rejoiced so greatly over the gift of a Saviour to our sinful world does it not show that we are all one great family and that God is the Father of us all! O, if God is our Father, Jesus our Saviour, the angels our loving friends, and Heaven our home, how good, how happy, how full of gratitude we should be!

Mary. Yes, Ida, the beautiful sympathy between the angels in Heaven and the children of earth show us plainly that we are all one family of the good God. Paul says, "I bow my knees unto the Father of Jesus Christ. Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named."

Eva. Thus you see, dear children, that Christmas may well be merry, but it should be more than merry. It should be holy too. We should be glad down deep in our hearts with a joy that will make us better and bring us nearer to Jesus.

(Gertrude and Howard step forward a little and recite a little poem.)

Howard.—

Oh, the merry, merry Christmas!
How the children laugh and sing,
When this day so glad and gracious,
Doth its gifts and pleasures bring.

Oh, the merry, merry Christmas!
Every heart is blithe and gay,
Full of peace and loving kindness,
On this happy, blessed day.

Gertrude.—

Oh, the holy, holy Christmas,
Birthday of the Saviour mild
For the Son of God so mighty
Came to earth a little child.

Oh, the holy, holy Christmas!
Jesus came to earth below,
From his home in heaven so glorious,
Just to cure its pain and woe!

Both.—

Oh, the merry, holy Christmas!
Sweetest day to children given!
May we while we taste its pleasures
Try to find the path to heaven.

Mary. Jesus was called the Good Shepherd.

Otis.—

A good Shepherd, he doth keep
O'er his fold a watchful care
Guarding every precious sheep
And the little lambs so fair.
And if any wayward stray
Out into the cold and night,
Lovingly he points the way
Back to pastures green and bright.

Eva. He was the Great Teacher and Master.

George.—

Oh, my Jesus, let me be
A dear follower of thee.
Show me in my happy youth
How to learn and love the truth,
How to shun the paths of sin,
How to learn and enter in
At the straight and narrow gate
Where thy loving angels wait
Pointing to the Heavenly road
Which will lead me up to God!

Mary. He was the great Physician and Restorer.

Ida.—

The sick and dying by his healing touch
Returned to health and happiness again,
The lame man leaped for joy, the dumb sang praise,
The dead arose at his commanding voice!
And more than this, he healed the broken heart
And comforted and blest the erring ones
And last, and best, and greatest, he will lead
The world, restored, unto the Living God.

Eva. Jesus was the Saviour of the world.

Jennie.—

Jesus shalt thou call his name,
For a Saviour he shall be.
From the galling bonds of shame
He shall set his people free.
Jesus is his charming name
Full of tenderness and grace.
Those who love and serve him here
Shall behold his glorious face!

Mary. He was the Prince of Peace.

Grace.—

The Blessed Prince of Peace who reigns in love,
Who wins the spirit with the matchless grace
Of tenderness and makes it all his own!
O'er all his kingdom so divinely fair
Is only righteousness and peace and love.
He reigns, he rules, and love shall conquer hate,
And light shall scatter darkness all away,
And war shall be no more, and peace shall make
The world a paradise below!

Eva. He is the Resurrection and the Life.

Ellen.—

The grave was dark and pitiless
And hope had never pierced its gloom
Until the bleeding Saviour lay
Within the chill and narrow tomb.
A light then scattered dark and mist
And showed a portal open wide
Into the land where Jesus walked
With angels on the other side!

Mary. For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet.

Eva. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.

Mary. "And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subdued unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all."

Eva. Dear children, what shall we give to Jesus?

All. Let us give him our hearts.

(They all kneel with clasped hands.)

All.—

Thou Son of God and Saviour of the world!
O Christ, the great anointed Prince of Peace!
O Teacher, Healer, Comforter and Friend!
We bring our hearts, our fresh young hearts to thee!
O take and fill them with thy grace divine
That we may be the children of the Lord,
And humble followers of thee!

Minnie S. Davis.

"EVERYTHING in nature indulges in amusements of some kind. The lightnings play, the winds whistle, the thunders roll, the snow flies, the rills and cascades sing and dance, the waves leap, the fields smile, the vines creep and run, and the buds shoot. But some of them have their seasons of melancholy. The tempests moan, the zephyrs sigh, the brooks murmur, and the mountains look blue."

For the Myrtle.

The Watcher.

BENEATH the starlit night
The winter fields were white
And all the earth in silver radiance lay,
In silence sweet and deep,
The village kept its sleep
The night that ushered in the Christmas day.

In all the hamlet, none
Kept watch or ward, save one,
The faithful shepherd of the slumbering fold.
Who, pondering while they slept,
His thoughtful vigil kept,
Communion with those sacred hours to hold.

He at his casement stood
And all the silver flood
Of moonlight and of starlight o'er him fell.
As out across the night
He gazed with vision bright
And thought of all below he loved so well.

Sweetly his flock reposed
With trust and peace enclosed,
Secure in midnight as at brightest day;
And love lit every home
Like that which filled the gloom
Where cheek to cheek his own dear children lay.

No sentry kept the town
From perils all unknown,
From stealthy dangers or from dangers bold;
N strong and armed band
Shielded a trembling land
As in the godless centuries of old.

What was this new, sweet charm
That kept the world from harm?
From the up-pointing spire reply was given,
"The kingdom of the Son
Is on the earth begun,—
Is coming down from God, and out of heaven."

"It comes, and hate is dead
And love is born instead,
And old revenge to mercy sweet gives place;
And doubt and fear no more
Can keep their empire o'er
A world that once has seen its Father's face."

And through the silver air
The lonely watcher there
Heard the soft stir of angel-wings again;
And on his raptured ear
A heavenly voice fell c'ear,
Singing of peace on earth, good-will to men.

H. A. B.

—o-o—

A Lie Sticks.

A little newsboy, to sell his paper, told a lie. The matter came up in Sabbath School.

"Would you tell a lie for three cents?" asked a teacher of one of her boys.

"No, ma'am," answered Dick very decidedly.

"For ten cents?"

"No ma'am."

"For a dollar?"

"No ma'am."

"For a thousand dollars?"

Dick was staggered. A thousand dollars looked big. Oh, would it not buy lots of things? While he was thinking, another boy behind him cried out,

"No ma'am!"

"Why not?" asked the teacher.

"Because, when the thousand dollars are gone, and the things you've got with them are gone too, the lie is there just the same," answered the boy. Ah, yes! That is so. A lie sticks. Everything else may go; but that will stay, and you will have to carry it around with you, whether you will or not,—a hard and heavy load.

"Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord; but they that deal truly are his delight."

For the Myrtle.

Christmas Gifts.

CHRISTMAS again! Dear me, yes; one would know it was coming, even to walk along the streets, and see the shop windows, too full of pretty things for one hardly to dare look, lest he should rush in and spend all he has for Christmas at once. This world of toys! who makes them all, and who ever thought of them all? It must take a great many bright thoughts of many brains ever to study up so many curious things, not to speak of the work of planning and making them, and bringing them to our doors. A whole book full of interest could be written just in telling the children of the curious shops all over the world, and the wonderful ways in which their playthings are made for them.

Our friend, the editor of the *Guiding Star*, told us the other day she had been trying for weeks to go into the great toyshops in New York and just look at the toys, so to write the children something about them. She told us of the dolls at Tiffany's that cost six and seven hundred dollars apiece, and we both wished the foolish parents who buy them would save the money to give

Christmas gifts of warm stockings or good bread to the cold and hungry children of the poor. We think the same as we go by our own Auguste's, and see the fifty-dollar dolls in the window. Pretty creatures they are, to be sure; but too pretty ever to be played with, and too extravagantly dressed ever to serve as a model for a little girl with brains in her head.

We see all these costly nothings, and we think of John and Susie, man and woman now, who used to hang up their stockings and get Christmas presents twenty years ago. What would they have said to a fifty-dollar doll? Why, a ten-cent piece in the toe of the stocking and the rest filled with candy and nuts did very well; and if it was a new ribbon or a pocket-handkerchief, that made a jolly Christmas. The most extravagant Christmas they remember was the time Susie had her "truly" doll, the only one she ever owned and which she keeps to this day, though it is a little plain thing that the child of to-day would scarcely look at,—and John had a Noah's Ark and a wooden Punch, — things which hardly went together but which were equally precious; and together they had a picture-book and some big sugar-kisses. And the way all this came about was that the older children saved up their money for weeks beforehand and bought the little presents unknown to their parents.

Such magnificence as that was, in Johnnie's and Susie's eyes! When at the first peep of day they jumped up and tiptoed out in the dark to get the stockings, what was their delight to find them tied together at the toe with the square parcel that proved to be the picture book. In Susie's the doll sat upright, and in John's the Noah's Ark rode, end uppermost, with all the animals spilling out, while Mr. Punch was holding himself up out of the flood with his arms on the top of the stocking, while he grinned at them from his perch in a way to frighten a child on any morning but Christmas. With all these treasures, John and Susie scampered back to bed, and surely the daylight shone on no two happier heads than theirs as they looked them over and over, and wondered where they came from, and if Santa Claus really *did* come down the chimney, as the older ones tried to make them believe.

John and Susie have never forgotten that Christmas. It was not because they could not have presents that they rarely did, but because twenty years ago Christmas was much less kept than now, and in the country children were encouraged to make their own playthings, and "make believe a great deal," and we are not sure but they were happier in it than those who now have everything made to their hand. It was many years later when John and Susie first saw a Christmas tree.

But they have something besides Christmas gifts and nice dinners and parties to remember Christmas by. On that day they always heard about Christ; and many a beautiful service were they taken to, where the birth of Christ was celebrated. If they thought less of toys and goodies, they thought more of the great gift that came to the earth on Christmas day,—the Christ-child over whom the angels sang, — and were taught to become like him in spirit and in life.

So when Christmas comes around now, it is not the bright stores that attract Susie and John so much as the wreathed churches and the Christmas oratorios — the beautiful services where the birth of the Saviour is told in song and speech. And as they go by the church doors they find themselves singing, —

"Christ was born on Christmas day,
Weave the holly, twine the bay."

Our thousands of young readers will each have presents this Christmas day, we trust, as tokens of love from their friends; but we shall be sorry if toys and playthings make them forget the real meaning of the day, and the great gift which shows them the love of their heavenly Father. As they grow up may they learn more and more every year to say, "Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift." *H. A. B.*

A Little Girl's Cares.

I'm so very tired of running
Up and down the stairs;
Nobody ever seems to think
Little girls have cares.

Mother, aunt, and sisters want me—
Errands here and there;
Balls to wind and letters carry,
And go everywhere.

All the other girls are playing;
They have their own way.
When I'm a grown-up woman
I'll let children play."

Do we hear of such lamenting
In our blessed Lord?
"Even Christ pleased not himself,"
Is in God's own word.

The Myrtle and the Fires.

Our young readers have not had THE MYRTLE regularly since the great fire in Boston. We have remebered the thousands and thousands of children who have wondered why their paper did not come. And now we must explain the many troubles which have prevented the printing of the THE MYRTLE. The great fire melted the type, destroyed the printing presses and burned the paper. And then it destroyed all the type foundries so that we could get no type to take the place of what we lost. At last we got type from New York and obtained all the headings, pictures and other things needful to make the paper; and having two printing presses in our own building we were all ready to print THE MYRTLE once more, when a great fire on Cornhill stopped the steam engine which turns our presses, and they were as still as night. At last we found a place where the printing could be done, and felt sure that now the children would have their paper. But the printer had only just commenced his work when he was taken very sick. During his sickness the folks in the office thought they could print, and started the press; but not knowing their business, they broke the type. No sooner was the type made all right again, than very cold weather came on, and the steam of the steam-engine was all taken to heat the large building, and there was not steam enough left to turn the machinery. But, children, we are now able to send you your paper regularly. We have tried to be patient through these troubles: and we may laugh at them now they are over. And, children, you can imagine how very often we have thought of the readers of "THE MYRTLE."

Our Missionary Box.

We want every member of the Sunday School, teacher and scholar, young and old, to read this word of our good Br. Crosley, who is for this year the Shepherd of the Missionary Boxes. Do not forget the Christmas gift for the Missionary Box with all the rest. Is not that a member of the family?

"I desire for a moment to have the attention of the children. I sincerely trust that all the children who take this paper will read what is here said concerning the Missionary Box. I have undertaken, for the coming year, to manage the Missionary Box enterprise, and I have felt all the time that it would be necessary to call to my aid the children who are always ready to help in any good work.

The children may not know what the Missionary Box is for. I will briefly tell them. It is for the purpose of raising money to help educate young men for the ministry, so that they can preach the Gospel as Universalists beli ve it. And also to build up new churches in places where none exist at the present time. Whatever money is raised through the Missionary Boxes is to be used principally as named above.

Now, children, you can do good service and help me in this work. All of you that have boxes at home can pass the box around every day or week and have the older members of the family put something in. They are so apt to forget the box, but I am sure you will not. I want to see how much the children will do in this way. Whenever your father, mother, and the older ones forget or neglect to put anything in the box, you remind them of it. Bring the box to them and see that a penny or more goes in every day or two. Suppose one penny goes in the box every day, how much would there be at the end of the year? And again, if two pennies a week are given, how much will be in the box at the end of the year? I would like to see how many o the children will answer these questions and send me the result, and at the same time let me know if I can have your assistance as just named. I would be gratified to hear from a great many. If any of you feel like writing, direct your letters to M. Crosley, Supt. of Missionary Boxes, 1288 Broadway, New York."

Our Sunday Schools.

—For the next few weeks we shall doubtless have "no end" of Christmas entertainments to tell about. And the more the better so they are briefly and pleasantly told. Send in the accounts of your good times, friends, and be sure to tell just those things you would most like the other schools to know.

CONNECTICUT.

—This is not exactly about the Sunday School, but it is about a kindred work—the week day Conference Meeting in the church of Rev. Mrs. Hanaford of New Haven, a lady well-known to the readers of the MYRTLE. These Friday evening meetings are of great interest to old and young. They are a connecting link, as it were, between the preaching and the Sunday School teaching. The theme of the evening is given beforehand, and the pastor has a short address, when all are free to speak or ask questions,—oral or written. The subjects for the winter are in series, as follows; and we give them because they will furnish a good suggestion to other similar meetings.

For December—Universalism.
- As a Creed;
- As a Life;
- As a Power;
- As a Comfort;
- As a Joy.

January—Christ.
- As a Leader;
- As a Friend;
- As a Law-Giver;
- As a Saviour.

February—Life.
- A Conflict;
- A Place of Growth;
- A School;
- A Journey.

March.—
- Prayer.
- Influence of Home.
- Ministry of Angels.
- True Worship.
- Heaven.

Does not this promise well for an interested church at New Haven?

VERMONT.

—The Society and Sunday School at Barre united in a parting gift to Prof. L. L. Burrington of Goddard Seminary, just resigned to make his home in the West. Their gift was a bronze mantel-clock of beautiful design, presented as a testimonial of their appreciation of his active service in choir and Sunday School during the three years he has had charge of the Seminary. The pupils of the latter also joined in the gift of an elegant gold chain as a companion to the watch given in the same way a year ago.

Life of the Saviour.

LESSON CXV.

THE BETRAYAL.

"The God of Abraham hath glorified his Son Jesus, whom ye delivered up."

SCRIPTURE, — Math. xxvi. 47–75. Mark xiv. 43–72. Luke xxii. 47–62. John xviii. 2–27.

Question. — How did Judas know where to lead the officers to arrest Jesus?

Answer. — John xviii. 2.

Q. — When did he come to the garden with the officers and soldiers?

A. — Math. xxvi. 47.

Q. — At what time was this?

A. — John xviii. 3.

Q. — By what sign was Judas to inform the officers which Jesus was?

A. — Mark xiv. 44, 45.

Q. — How were they affected when Jesus came forward and told them that he was the person they were seeking?

A. — John xviii. 6.

Q. — What did Peter do in defence of his Master?

A. — John xviii. 10.

Q. — What did they do to Jesus?

A. — John xviii. 13.

Q. — As they were taking Jesus, what miracle did he request them to permit him to perform?

A. — Luke xxii. 51.

Q. — What did the disciples do when Jesus was arrested?

A. — Mark xiv. 50.

Q. — How did Peter follow Jesus?

A. — Mark xiv. 54.

Q. — Which other of the disciples followed Jesus?

A. — John xviii. 15.

Q. — As John was known to the high priest, what privilege did he enjoy?

A. — John xviii. 15.

Q. — What privilege did he obtain for Peter?

A. — John xviii. 16.

Q. — What had Jesus told Peter?

A. — Luke xxii. 34.

Q. — What was Peter charged with?

A. — John xviii. 17.

Q. — How many times did Peter deny that he was a follower of Jesus?

A. — John xviii. 17, 25, 26.

Q. — How was he finally recognized as a follower of Christ?

A. — John xviii. 26.

Q. — What happened when Peter denied his Master the third time?

A. — John xviii. 27.

Q. — What did Jesus do as the cock crew?

A. — Luke xxii. 61.

Q. — How was Peter affected?

A. — Luke xxii. 62.

Enigma.

I am composed of 45 letters.

My 9, 30, 3, is a kind of grain.

My 5, 33, 39, 23, 13, is a river in Europe.

My 32, 8, 44, is an article of dress.

My 40, 17, 4, 31, 33, 38, 32, 21, 3, 10, 11, 16, 6, is one of the United States.

My 1, 22, 20, 39, 19, is useful in every house.

My 24, 2, 25, 21, 26, is one of the necessaries of life.

My 42, 43, 35, 29, 23, 31, 5, is a county in New York.

My 12, 6, 34, 45, 23, is a girl's name.

My 41, 37, 36, 43, 21, 31, 22, 14, is one of the months.

My 46, 34, 8, 27, 28, is an enemy.

My 7, 45, 1, 18, is what no one likes to be in.

My 9, 17, 15, is an animal.

My whole is one of the precious sayings of our Saviour.

Answers.

DEC. 14. No. 1, Peace on earth. No. 2, A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches.

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